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Legislative Bulletin.....March 24, 2010

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H.R. 4360 - To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs blind rehabilitation center in Long Beach, California, as the “Major Charles R. Soltes, Jr., O.D. Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Center” (Campbell, R-CA)

Order of Business: The legislation is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 24, 2010, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 4360 designates the Department of Veterans Affairs blind rehabilitation center in Long Beach, California as the “Major Charles R. Soltes, Jr., O.D. Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Center.”

Additional Information: Army Major Charles R. Soltes, Jr. O.D., served as a public health officer and was assigned to the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, Army Reserve, in Upland California. He was killed in Mosul, Iraq on October 13, 2004 when an IED detonated near his convoy vehicle. He was the first Army optometrist killed in action while on active duty.

Committee Action: H.R. 4360 was introduced on December 16, 2009 and referred to the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, which took no public action.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO report is unavailable, but the only costs associated with a U.S. federal building renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: A committee report citing compliance with the rules regarding earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits is not available.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

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H.R. 4915 – Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010 (Oberstar, D-MN)

Order of Business: The legislation is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 24, 2010, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: The legislation would extend the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) authority to collect taxes and administer FAA programs through July 3, 2010 (under current law this authority lapses on March 31, 2010). Specifically, the legislation would:

- Extend Funding for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through July 3, 2010;
- Extend the Airport and Airway Trust Fund Expenditure Authority through July 4, 2010; and
- Extend the airport Improvement Program through July 3, 2010.

Sets Authorized Spending Levels: This legislation authorizes the following FAA programs, and sets authorized funding levels (subject to appropriation) as follows:

FAA Operations, \$7.070 billion

Air Navigation Facilities and Equipment, \$2.220 billion

Research, Engineering, and Development, \$144 million

Additional Background: The FAA’s authority to collect taxes and administer AATF programs has been extended nine times since FY 2007. Without an extension, the FAA’s authority to collect and spend these taxes will expire on December 31, 2009. The last extension was enacted on December 16, 2009 (H.R. 4217). The House passed a four-year reauthorization bill ([H.R. 915](#)) on May 21, 2009, by a vote of [277 – 136](#).

A similar bill (H.R. 4853) passed the House on March 19, 2010 by voice vote. The only difference in the two text is found in Section 4 (a)(3)(B). The process by which the Administrator of the FAA calculates funding is changed slightly. The Administrator calculates funding on an annualized basis and reduces that number by 11 percent, as opposed to 89/365 (24.38 percent) under H.R. 4853.

Committee Action: H.R. 4915 was introduced on March 23, 2010, and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the House Committee on Ways and Means, which took no public action.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO report is unavailable.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No CBO score listing any potential mandates is available.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: A committee report citing compliance with the rules regarding earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits is not available.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

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